

Robert B. Gillian, a Whig, received 65 votes and was elected; Ellis received 38 votes; and Gaston H. Wilder, one vote. This evidence of respect on the part of his party was probably partly due to his speech against redistricting.

At this time talk of the Mexican War was on every lip, and Ellis wished to win in battle the brilliant success that he had already won on the political stage. In a very unprecedented article, the Editor of the *Standard* made the following remarks about Ellis going to the War:

Maj. Ellis, we understand, belongs to the Rowan Company, which is *first* on the roll of the Adjutant General for the Mexican War; and we learn that he contemplates leaving for Mexico as a private in that Company. He will leave behind him many gratifying recollections of his accomplishments as a gentleman, as well as of his ability at the bar, and his devotion to the public interests as a member of the House of Commons; and we hope that some higher post than that of a private will be awarded him—if indeed any position can be higher than that of a common soldier, who shoulders his musket and goes forward to encounter the privations of the camp and the long and painful marches of the campaign. With such men as Wilson, Ellis, and Wilder voluntarily giving up their seats in the Legislature, cheerfully staking their lives for the country in a contest with a perfidious enemy in a foreign land, North Carolina will truly present a noble spectacle to the citizens of other States. The blood of 1775 is up, and the Old North is ready, as she has ever been, to stand up and stand forward in the hour of trial.<sup>42</sup>

The company was accepted on December 21, 1846, and marched off to Charlotte on the last day of December, where it was ordered to rendezvous. Here they waited for three weeks for an officer of the United States to muster them into service and provide them with camp equipment. "They became impatient—dissatisfied and restless on account of the tardiness of the government Officer, and their poor accommodations . . . until finally the whole company, with some eight or ten exceptions, left the Camp."<sup>43</sup>

After this fiasco, Ellis decided to attempt to raise his own company. The *Watchman* said of his effort that "John W. Ellis, Esq. has put his hand to the work of collecting the men, and obtaining others if necessary, to form a company, and possessing as he does the confidence of his fellow citizens here, we cannot doubt his success."<sup>44</sup> He failed, nonetheless, to raise a company.

A period of depression now occurred in the life of young Ellis.

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<sup>42</sup>*North Carolina Standard*, December 30, 1846.

<sup>43</sup>*Carolina Watchman*, January 29, 1847.

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